

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I.

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-24 are presently active in the application. Claims 1-12 have been cancelled.

Applicants note with appreciation the examiner's acknowledgment of their claim for foreign priority under 35 USC 119(a)-(d) or (f) and receipt of all of the certified copies of the priority documents.

Applicants note that the examiner attached a copy of the form PTO-1449 included with the information disclosure statement that they submitted on October 4, 2001. However, the examiner did not initial the form PTO-1449 to indicate that the references cited therein have been considered. The examiner is respectfully requested to consider the cited references and initial the form PTO-1449 when issuing the next office action.

A minor clarifying amendment has been made to claim 13, which does not change the scope of the claim. No new matter has been added.

II.

Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The office action indicates that the phrase "a mass of adhesive substance" in claim 23 is not understood. Claim 23 relates to the second form of the double-sided adhesive film described on page 5 lines 11-19 wherein the double-sided film is formed of a solid layer of adhesive and does not include a flexible film serving as a support between the two adhesive sides as described with respect to the first form on page 5 lines 1-9 of the specification. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 23 is definite as worded, and they respectfully request that the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

III.

Claims 13-18, 21, and 23 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ota (U.S. Patent No. 6,016,134) in view of Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,209,985). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Neither of the applied references discloses nor suggests the subject matter set forth in claim 13. The element 51 illustrated in Fig. 4 of Ota corresponds to the first transparent plate 3 and the second transparent plate 4 illustrated, for example, in Fig. 2 of the present application, but it does not disclose the at least partially transparent third plate mechanically reinforcing the first plate corresponding to the element 7 illustrated, for example, in Fig. 2 of the present application. The element 1 disclosed by Ota is a touch panel that is not part of the display screen 51 and that is not attached to the first plate as set forth in claim 13. Moreover, Ota does not disclose how the layers of the display screen 51 are attached. Suzuki et al. disclose two separate display screens 1 and 2 separated by spacers 3. Although Suzuki et al. discloses that the spacers 3 may take the form of a double-sided adhesion tape (column 2 lines 13-17), Suzuki et al. does not teach or suggest the structure set forth in claim 13 of a first plate being mechanically reinforced by an at least partially transparent third plate, wherein the first and third plates are secured together by way of an adhesive element comprising at least one double-sided adhesive film. Suzuki et al. disclose conventional sealing materials 9 for attaching layers 7 shown in Fig. 3 (column 2 lines 1-13). Suzuki et al. disclose that the polarizer 6 is stuck to the layer 7, but it neither discloses any structure for that attachment nor does it indicate that the polarizer 6 performs any mechanical reinforcement of the layer 7. Accordingly, the applied references whether taken along or in any proper combination do not teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 13. Thus,

Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 13 under 35 USC 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 14-24 depends either directly or indirectly from claim 13. Accordingly, those claims patentably distinguish over the applied references for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 13. Moreover, each of those claims includes additional limitations that further patentably distinguish over the applied references.

IV.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 13-24.

Respectfully submitted,

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